Your Community Magazine

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NEW YEAR'S ISSUE



When the Water Rose, Effingham Rose with Them

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February/March 2026

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Alisha Esselstein, Esq. has been named a **2025 SUPER LAWYERS GEORGIA RISING STAR** for the second year in a row, an honor reserved for attorneys who demonstrate exceptional excellence in their practice. Only 2.5% of attorneys in Georgia receive this prestigious distinction.

In addition, Alisha won *Georgia Business Journal's* "Best of Georgia 2024" in the Family Law Category, a testament to her dedication and the trust placed in her by the community.

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1. Alycia Calderin is a Florida native who moved to Georgia in 2013, where she planted roots with her husband of 16 years. When she's not balancing the whirlwind of activities for her four kids, she escapes into the world of books.

2. Leidy Lester is a freelance photographer, originally from Bogota, Colombia. One of her proudest achievements was working with models and highly experienced photographers in Las Vegas.

3. Gail Mihalik lives in Rincon with Scott, her high school sweetheart, and their two rescue dogs. Chef by trade with over 50 years of experience, she spends most of her time living, loving, and sharing the history and culture of the area.

4. Scott Douglas Miller is a broadcaster celebrating 50 years in radio as an air personality, news director, event DJ and content provider several publications. He Originally from Mississippi, Scott shares a home in Rincon with his high school sweetheart, Gail.

5. Gail Parsons has more than 30 years experience writing for magazines and newspapers. She most enjoys feature writing because it allows her to share the stories of interesting and inspiring people. She is also an artist and enjoys traveling and spending time at the beach.

6. Stephen Prudhomme lived in Savannah and Rincon for 25 years before moving to Pikeville, TN, with his wife and son. He's written sports, features, news and business for a number of newspapers and magazines over nearly 40 years and likes table tennis, Frisbee and running.

7. Cindy Reid has been a freelance writer for over 15 years. A native of New York's Hudson Valley, she embodies the saying "I wasn't born in the South but I got here as soon as I could." She can usually be found on a beach, a boat or at a pier at sunset.

8. Claire Sandow is a marketing professional who lives in Savannah with her husband, daughter and cat. In her spare time, she enjoys pursuing her many hobbies, including knitting, crocheting, quilting and running.

9. Laura Zielinski is a freelance graphic designer specializing in print design. When she's not working, she loves spending time with her husband Keith and their three beautiful children.

10. Mabel, morale officer, enjoys roaming the backyard at home, sitting for hours on the back porch and coming to the office to greet visitors and encourage the staff. Mabel loves getting treats and taking long naps in her mommy's office in the afternoons.


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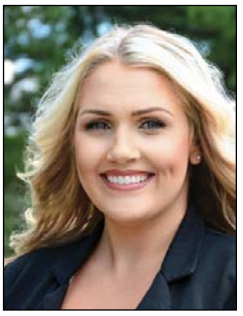

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Write and tell us what you think. *Effingham Magazine* welcomes all letters to the editor. Please send letters to Jan Southern at Jan@JDelSURMarketing.com. Letters to the editor must have a phone number and name of contact. Phone numbers will not be published.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS
Effingham Magazine welcomes story ideas from our readers. If you have a story idea or photos to share, please submit ideas and material to Jan Southern at Jan@JDelSURMarketing.com. Stories or ideas for stories must be submitted by email. Only feature stories and photo essays about people, places or things in the Effingham area will be considered.

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New Year's Issue


Jan Southern

There's no denying it—Effingham County is growing fast. With growth comes a fair share of frustration. New developments, more traffic, changes to the places we've always known—it can feel overwhelming at times. I hear it from readers, neighbors, and business owners every week about the changing dynamics. Some are not too happy about all the growth. Still others see the opportunity that it provides for our futures and those of our children.

But here's what stands out to me—despite the challenges, Effingham and its people are more resilient than ever. People are still looking out for each other, supporting local businesses, and finding ways to stay connected as we navigate the changes and the uncertainty.

At *Effingham Magazine*, our goal is to keep telling the real stories behind the headlines. We aren't sharing all the news and noise; we are sharing stories about real people. We share stories of the individuals who are overcoming challenges, accomplishing great things or giving back to the community in a unique way. Growth and change bring discomfort, but it also brings new opportunities and new voices.

We're committed to covering both—the hard parts and the hopeful ones—because both matter to the future of Effingham County and the cities of Rincon, Springfield, Guyton and beyond.

As we move into a new year, let's keep the conversation honest. Let's acknowledge what's tough but also stay focused on what we can accomplish together. Effingham's best days are built on the strength of its people, and that's something worth holding onto.

Thanks for sticking with us and for being part of this community.

Jan Southern

CEO/Publisher
Effingham Magazine

Meet Kelsey Harrison



We are excited to introduce Kelsey Harrison, Account Executive at J. DelSUR Marketing and *Effingham Magazine*. Kelsey consults with clients on marketing and advertising strategies, helping coordinate both print and digital campaigns for businesses across the region. She also brings experience as a licensed real estate agent, adding another layer of local expertise to our team.

Kelsey lives in Guyton with her husband, Nevada, and is a devoted stepmom. Please reach out and welcome Kelsey to the team!
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When the Water Rose, Effingham Rose with Them

Story by Gail Parsons

For years, Justyne and David Albright have opened the gates of FCS Equestrian Center not just as business owners, but as neighbors. Their property has been a place where children learned to ride, charities gathered, and the community came together whenever help was needed.

So, when sudden flooding swept through their Effingham County property in August 2025 destroying their home, equipment, and much of what they had built, the response was immediate and deeply personal.

By the next day, friends, former students, neighbors, and complete strangers lined the driveway, ready to help. The kindness the Albrights had poured into the community for years came galloping back.

For more than three decades, horses have been central to Justyne Albright's life. Seventeen of those years have been spent working professionally in the equestrian industry. Today, alongside her husband, she operates FCS Equestrian Center, a riding school specializing in English disciplines.

"If you want to learn one of the English disciplines, this is the place to come," she said. "You don't have to own a horse—we have lesson horses at different levels."

But at FCS, the horses are only part of the story.

"The horses aren't just great exercise," Justyne said. "They teach communication, responsibility, and self-discipline. You must take care of them every day, whether you want to or not."

The center serves both children and adults, and over the years, Justyne and David have become woven into the fabric of Effingham County and surrounding communities.

Building Community — One Event at a Time

One of the projects Justyne is most proud of came during the pandemic.

"We kept hearing from parents and kids about how much they missed things like trick-or-treating," she said.

FCS created *Trot or Treat*.

"We had 13 gates on our property, and each one was decorated and sponsored by a local business," she said.

Families came. Businesses joined. Kids laughed. For a moment, it felt like normal life again.

But that event, like much else, changed when the Effingham Parkway project cut directly through the Albrights' land.

Land Lost — and then, the Unthinkable

"Our land was taken by eminent domain in 2020," Justyne said.

Construction began in 2022, and the effects quickly compounded.

"We've downsized quite a bit," she said. "Hosting events isn't impossible, it's just much more difficult."

Then, in late August 2025, came the night that changed everything.

Justyne was braiding a horse, preparing for a show scheduled the next day. The barn was quiet and familiar. Her husband had gone to the house to start dinner.



Sheets of water raced toward the property, while runoff from nearby subdivision construction funneled down their road. In minutes, ordinary rain became a current.

Moments later, he returned "white as a ghost."

"He said, 'We're going to have a problem,'" she recalled. "We'd had heavy rain, but nothing unusual. It wasn't a hurricane, just rain."

Nothing suggested disaster. But this time, the stormwater didn't drain as it once had.

"You could see it. It was like a dam breaking," she said. "Parts of the parkway collapsed, and water poured through. It happened fast."

Sheets of water raced toward the property, while runoff from nearby subdivision construction funneled down their road. In minutes, ordinary rain became a current.

They didn't stop to think. Years of caring for animals took over. They loaded feed and hay, moved equipment to higher ground, and began evacuating horses.

Within an hour, parts of the farm were under two to four feet of water.

The main barn stood on higher ground. Others did not.

Help arrived almost as quickly as the flood. Former students, neighbors, and even people who "had hardly ever handled a horse," Justyne said, lined the drive—walking animals through rising water to safety.

Every animal was saved.

The house was not.

"We lost our home," she said. "Our equipment, our tools—everything inside."





What the water didn't take, it ruined. They left with only what could be loaded before the road disappeared.

What remained was mud, silence, and the reality that the place they had built their life around was no longer livable—while the horses still needed care the next morning.

And Then the Community Showed Up

What happened next, Justyne still struggles to describe.

"It was overwhelming, in a good way," she said.

Her sister, hundreds of miles away, posted online asking for help. Within hours, the response exploded.

Volunteers arrived before Justyne even realized the post was live. Word spread barn to barn, church to church, county to county.

"By the next day, people were lined up helping us clear out the house," she said. "It shows how incredible our community is, not just Effingham, but Chatham County and Bluffton, SC too.

Some brought chainsaws and wheelbarrows. Others brought food, water, and gloves.

People who had never met the Albrights stepped into the mud without asking what to do—they simply did it.

They hauled furniture, stacked ruined belongings, moved hay and feed, and stood quietly when words ran out. A disaster scene became a workday, a gathering, a reminder that community is something lived, not just talked about.

Giving Back — Long Before the Flood

Service, Justyne said, has been part of her life since childhood.

"My dad always taught my sister and me that you give back," she said.

Over the years, she and David have supported charities, churches, schools, and families wherever help was needed.

"If someone asks, we try to help," she said.

In the days after the flood, that generosity came full circle.

Looking Into 2026

As 2026 approaches, the future remains uncertain. Repairs and long-term mitigation are still unresolved.

"It's going to take some pivoting," Justyne said. "We have to factor flooding into everything now."

Five months later, the flooding issues remain largely unaddressed. "No one is taking responsibility," she said. "Someone has to be held accountable."

That frustration has become fuel.

In 2026, Justyne plans to press harder, asking questions she believes more residents should be asking: Who is responsible? How will future flooding be prevented? Who oversees stormwater planning?

Still, one thing remains non-negotiable.

"The lesson program is going on," she said. "It's still thriving."

Looking ahead, Justyne hopes to expand educational clinics, including programs focused on stormwater and land management—turning experience into shared knowledge.

"We're not the only ones who've flooded," she said.

Despite land loss, uncertainty, and rebuilding still ahead, Justyne remains focused on moving forward.

"We can only go forward," she said.

And at the center of it all remain the horses—steady, resilient, and constant—carrying a community that never stopped showing up and living out FCS Equestrian Center's mission: to provide access to equestrian sport while empowering individuals to build strength, independence, and a kinder way to treat others.

In 2026, that mission continues—alongside a louder call for accountability, innovation, and change. ■

"By the next day, people were lined up helping us clear out the house. It shows how incredible our community is, not just Effingham, but Chatham County and Bluffton, SC, too."



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Please join us during this powerful reminder of faith's enduring promise and the universal call to love and compassion!

Palm Sunday – March 29
8:30 am – Contemporary Worship Service
9:45 am – Sunday School
11:00 am – Traditional Worship Service
4:00-6:00 pm – Easter Egg Hunt

Maundy Thursday – April 2
7:00 pm – Tenebrae and Holy Communion Service

Good Friday – April 3
6:00 am – 7:00 pm (drop in) – Stations of the Cross
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Easter Sunday – April 5
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8:30 am – Contemporary Worship Service
9:45 am – Sunday School
11:00 am – Traditional Worship Service

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The Corner Table
Effingham County

by Gail Mihalik

Ms. Jean's Restaurant: Where Southern Sundays Live All Week Long



Tucked just off the main drag in Rincon, Ms. Jean's isn't the kind of place you stumble into by accident. It's the kind of place someone points you toward whispering, "You gotta try the fried chicken," or "Don't leave without the mac and cheese." And let me tell you — they're not exaggerating. The fried chicken alone is a pilgrimage-worthy experience: golden, crackly, with seasoning that works its way straight into your memory.

Walk through the doors, and you're greeted not by menus or fancy host stands, but by that blackboard — the daily gospel of Southern fare. This isn't a restaurant where you fret over options. You simply scan the board, nod at destiny, and get ready to be fed right.

The Comfort of Custom

Ms. Jean's operates cafeteria-style — or as Southerners fondly call it, "meat-and-three." Choose a meat of your choice and fill your plate with three sides. Though truth be told, the phrase "only three" feels like a test of self-control. Luckily, seconds — and extra sides — are encouraged and never judged.

On any given day you'll find: Fried chicken (the undisputed queen of the menu); Crisp Pork Chops; Tender Beef Tips, and Sausage Casserole — *the kind that tastes like Sunday breakfast meets Sunday Supper*

Then the sides — oh, the sides — this is where the South sings: Creamy mac and cheese with the pull of real cheddar. Collard greens cooked low and slow with that whisper of smokiness. Black-eyed peas that taste like New Year's Day blessings. Butter beans, stewed potatoes, string beans, candied yams, squash casserole… the choices change, but the comfort stays constant.

And then there's the cornbread and biscuits — soft, tender, and warm. The biscuit in particular is something special — it feels like a hug from your memaw: gentle, familiar, and filled with love.

Hospitality with Heart

The staff at Ms. Jean's are as sweet as the tea — and trust me, that is sweet. They glide through the dining room with refills, recommendations, and genuine smiles. They pride themselves on spotting the first-timer — wide-eyed, quietly overwhelmed, standing a little too long in front of the blackboard, trying to choose between squash and sweet potatoes. "Sugar, get both," one might say with a wink, "we'll make room."

There's no pretension here — no fuss, no forced formality. It's the kind of place where strangers will nod across the room, where someone might lean over and say, "You made the right choice with those pork chops," and you'll believe them.

A Taste of Tradition

Ms. Jean's isn't about reinventing the wheel. It's about rolling it back to when lunch was hot, hearty, and made with love. This is the food your grandmother cooked when the family was coming over — the kind that doesn't just feed the stomach, but restores the spirit. It's food with a Southern drawl and a side of soul.

A lingering feeling

By the time you're ready to leave — maybe with a piece of homemade cake boxed up for later — you'll feel a little fuller, a little warmer, and a little more connected to a community of people who know the value of slow cooking and shared meals.

And as you walk out the door, the words you'll likely hear are, "Come see us again soon." Trust me — you will.







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SunCare Hospice & Palliative Care Spreads Holiday Hope With Thanksgiving Food Drive

What began as a simple question—"Why can't we do more?"—turned into a powerful community effort that touched dozens of families across Effingham County this Thanksgiving. Led by Office Manager Caitlin Gibson, SunCare Hospice & Palliative Care in Rincon organized a Thanksgiving Food Drive that grew far beyond its original vision, fueled by compassion and community collaboration.

Traditionally, SunCare provided one hot holiday meal to a patient and their family. But this year, something felt different. Caitlin began receiving calls from community members asking whether SunCare had a food pantry. Food scarcity is a real concern, especially for individuals under hospice care who may be living on minimal or no food assistance and facing the holidays with worry instead of warmth.

"It hit home," Caitlin said. "I knew we could do better."

With encouragement from her church family and support from SunCare leadership, Caitlin launched a full Thanksgiving meal drive. She requested specific items that make up a traditional holiday dinner, including canned vegetables, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, and gift cards for perishable items. Word spread quickly on social media, and donations began pouring into the SunCare office.

A major boost came from Lighthouse Baptist Church of Brooklet, whose congregation supplied bags of food and helped promote the effort. Their generosity allowed SunCare not only to meet the needs of its own patients, but also to extend support to families connected to the church. Out of SunCare's census of 50 patients, 14 families expressed a need—and all 14 received full Thanksgiving meals. Lighthouse Baptist Church families received an additional 14 food bags, doubling the impact.

SunCare's nurses, who see firsthand the challenges patients face inside their homes, played a crucial role in identifying needs. Central Hospice also contributed by providing turkeys to staff members, three of which were immediately donated to families who otherwise would have gone without.

The ripple effect didn't stop there. With an abundance of donations, SunCare was able to supply 20 additional food bags to a local elementary school, ensuring even more families experienced a brighter holiday.

This effort reflects the heart behind SunCare Blessings, Inc., the organization's ongoing initiative to use donations directly for patient needs—whether that means repairing a porch, providing lawn care, or assisting with essential household tasks.

"We believe in doing things right and having empathy for our patients," Caitlin said. "This is part of who we are."

Caitlin's passion for service runs deep. Her mother worked in hospice, and Caitlin herself was a CNA directly caring for patients before transitioning into her current role. She sees her work as a calling and a way to leave a meaningful imprint on the community she loves. SunCare's census now includes 54 patients, all receiving care in their homes, and the organization is preparing to open a six-bed inpatient unit in Springfield by spring.

For Caitlin, the success of the Thanksgiving Food Drive is just the beginning.

"I wish we could do more," she said. "And we will."











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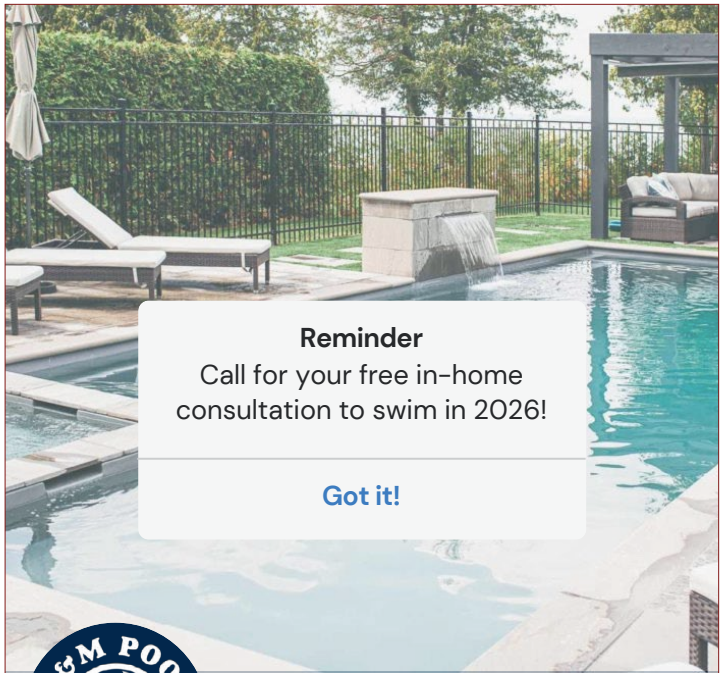
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Why Now is the Time to Double Down on Leafy Greens

As concerns about childhood obesity and chronic disease reach crisis levels, public health experts are urging Americans to eat more fresh produce.

For the first time in history, more children worldwide are obese than underweight – a reversal driven largely by diets dominated by ultra-processed foods and a shortage of fresh fruits and vegetables, according to UNICEF. It's not just an issue impacting children. In the United States, adult obesity rates have hovered at approximately 40% from 2021-2023, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Fresh produce in the United States has never been safer with extensive federal requirements for leafy greens. Farmers and produce companies have also taken food safety concerns seriously, investing heavily in prevention, testing and traceability systems. Many farmers and food companies voluntarily comply with industry-wide standards. For example, in California, the Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (LGMA) sets measurable and verifiable standards for the produce industry, further enhancing food safety.

The numbers tell a compelling story about both safety and benefits. Americans consume 130 million servings of leafy greens every day, according to the Western Growers Association. Meanwhile, the evidence linking leafy green consumption to better health outcomes continues to mount.

Research published in the journal "Neurology" found eating approximately one serving per day of leafy greens was associated with slower cognitive decline – equivalent to being 11 years younger in age. A study by the "Institute for Functional Medicine" discovered diets rich in leafy greens sparked DNA changes that reversed biological aging by up to 3.23 years. The cardiovascular benefits extend beyond mortality reduction. A study published in the "European Journal of Nutrition" found consuming 1.5 cups of leafy greens daily could help prevent heart disease in older adults. As has long been documented in medical literature, consuming more fruits and vegetables is associated with lower mortality rates.



"This isn't just about adding years to your life; it's about maintaining quality of life and independence as we age. It's also important to remember that," said Dr. David Acheson, a medically trained food safety expert who previously served in leadership at both the FDA and USDA. Access to fresh produce has also never been more convenient or varied. From bagged salads and pre-cut vegetables to ready-to-eat fresh cut fruit bowls or vegetable trays, there are countless ways to incorporate healthy foods into diets. These options reduce barriers to healthy eating by eliminating prep time and providing portion-controlled servings that help minimize food waste while making nutritious choices more accessible. This means the real challenge is translating this abundance of fresh produce into better dietary habits and improved public health.

In a nation grappling with obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cognitive decline, doubling down on fresh produce isn't just good advice. It's a public health imperative.

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Save the Date for the Habitat for Humanity Annual Gala

Saturday, March 21, 2026 | Moncrief Square

Join Habitat for Humanity of Effingham County for its annual fundraising gala on March 21! The event will return to Moncrief Square for the second year, where guests will enjoy food and drinks while connecting with others who are passionate about supporting attainable housing. Live entertainment and testimonials from some previous Habitat partner families will liven up the evening and guests will enjoy table decorations created by Habitat for Humanity's staff and board of directors.

"We look forward to celebrating a year of accomplishments with our supporters," says Jimmy Rutland, president/CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Effingham County. "In addition to being a memorable evening, it will be a wonderful opportunity for the community to learn about Habitat for Humanity's mission."

Last year's gala raised more than $12,000 to fund home construction and rehabilitation projects; this year Rutland hopes to surpass that amount.

Tickets are $50 each and include food, and beverages for the evening and entry to win one of the many door prize raffle items. There will also be an array of exciting items raffled off throughout the evening in addition to a live auction with amazing prizes donated by local businesses.

Event sponsorships are available at multiple tiers for businesses and community members to show support for the Habitat mission. Each tier includes tickets to the gala, advertising options for your business, and the privilege of supporting construction or our next home! Visit habitatec.org to purchase tickets or sponsorships.







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- Sponsor shoutout when door prize winner is announced

SMART MONEY MOVES: Budgeting & Saving in 2026

By Jessica Neeley



Do you know how much money you spent last month? Do you know what you spent your money on? With 49% of Americans living paycheck to paycheck (and that number on the rise due to the economy) it's more important than ever to manage your personal and business finances to stop or mitigate potential financial struggle in the future.

The New 2026 Budgeting Mindset

Apps and AI tools make tracking your money easier than ever, digital payments give you real-time transparency, and financial planning has become more efficient.

A successful 2026 budget begins with mindset and clarity. That means knowing exactly what money is coming in, where it's going, and how it aligns with the life you want to live.

Know Your Numbers: The Foundation of 2026 Savings

Before you can save more, you need to understand what you're working with. A simple three-step snapshot will help:

1. **Monthly Net Income:**
   What you actually bring home after taxes (aka what is actually deposited in your bank account).
2. **Fixed Expenses:**
   Housing, utilities, insurance, debt payments, subscriptions. These shouldn't surprise you each month—if they do, it's time to audit and simplify.
3. **Variable Expenses:**
   Groceries, gas, dining out, kids' activities, unexpected "life happens" items.

The simplest way to do this is to download an app like Mint, Good Money or Rocket Money and connect your accounts. Or if you are a paper and pen person, print your checking account statements for the last 3-6 months and calculate each category.

Once you've identified the big picture, look at the patterns. Are you overspending in one area? Do you need better limits? Are there monthly expenses you don't even use anymore?

This foundation allows you to build a 2026 budget that is both realistic and supportive of your goals—whether that's paying off debt, saving for a home, growing your business, retiring early or enjoying more financial freedom.

Modern Budgeting Systems That Actually Work

In 2026, the most effective budgets are the simplest ones. Here are three systems I recommend:

1. **The 50/30/20 Rule**
   - **50% Needs**
   - **30% Wants**
   - **20% Savings + Debt Payoff**

   This classic system still works, but adjust the percentages based on your cost of living. If housing



or insurance takes up more, shift your wants category down a bit.

2. **Zero-Based Budgeting (The Clarity Method)**
   Every dollar has a job. This method gives you total control, perfect for people who like structure or who are rebuilding their finances.
3. **Cash Flow Buckets (The Automation Method)**
   Separate accounts for:
   - Bills
   - Spending
   - Savings
   - Business or side-hustle goals

   Automation ensures your savings happen without willpower or remembering anything.

Digital Tools That Save Time—and Money

2026 offers more financial tools than ever. A few favorites:

- **AI-powered budgeting apps** that categorize your spending automatically.
- **High-yield savings accounts** now paying competitive interest rates.
- **Round-up saving tools** that turn spare change into meaningful money.
- **Price-tracking apps** that ensure you never overpay online.
- **Cashback browser extensions** that earn money quietly in the background.

Use technology to your advantage. Let it do the heavy lifting so you can stay focused on the bigger financial picture.

The 2026 Money-Saving Playbook

If you want to save more this year, don't just hope for it—plan for it. Here are 5 core strategies that work today and will keep working:

1. **Audit Your Subscriptions Every Quarter**
   Most households waste anywhere from $20–$60 a month on unused subscriptions. That's up to $720 a year you could be saving without sacrificing anything.

2. **Meal Plan Like a CEO**
   Food waste is one of the biggest money drains. Planning meals not only saves money—it saves time and stress. Using simple, repeatable meal plans cuts your grocery bill dramatically.
3. **"Buy Ahead" During Sales**
   Stock up on items you know you'll use—paper products, pantry staples, toiletries—only when the price is at its lowest.
4. **Implement No-Spend Days**
   Pick one or two days a week where you don't buy anything. It resets your habits and keeps the impulse purchases away.
5. **Prioritize Experiences Over Things**
   This is a mindset shift that supports your financial goals while still enjoying your life. You don't have to spend big money to make memories.

The economy may shift, prices may change, and unexpected expenses will always show up. But when you have a budget that reflects your values, savings strategies that work automatically, and a mindset rooted in confidence—not pressure—you position yourself for long-term financial stability.

You can financially win 2026, you just need consistency, clarity, and a plan. And with each smart money move, you get one step closer to the freedom, peace, and opportunity you deserve. ■



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At our practice, we believe your natural teeth are worth saving. And with today's advanced crown technology, restoring them is easier, more comfortable, and more beautiful than ever.

Your teeth are worth saving—don't give up on them

When a tooth is damaged, it can feel easier to simply remove it. But extraction often leads to more problems—shifting teeth, bone loss, difficulty chewing, and costly treatments later.

A crown gives you something an extraction never can: the chance to keep your natural tooth for years—often decades—to come. Many patients who once thought pulling the tooth was their only option are now grateful they chose to save it instead. When a damaged tooth is removed, it's gone forever—but a crown protects and strengthens the tooth you already have.

Most patients are surprised to learn that a crown can restore a tooth so well that it feels just like their natural tooth again—only stronger.

Your smile will look better than ever

Our crowns are custom-designed to blend flawlessly with your surrounding teeth. Whether you want to enhance your smile or simply restore one damaged tooth, your crown will look bright, natural, and beautifully shaped.

Many patients say they smile bigger—and more confidently—after receiving their crowns than they ever did before.

Comfort, strength, & relief you can feel immediately

Damaged teeth can quietly steal your comfort:

- You chew differently.
- You avoid certain foods.
- You may have sensitivity or discomfort.
- You worry about the tooth breaking even more.

A crown changes all of that. Patients are often stunned at how quickly their comfort returns once the tooth is protected. Suddenly, eating is easy again. Speaking feels normal. And the constant worry disappears.

Protect yourself from bigger problems later

Delaying treatment almost always leads to more damage—sometimes to the point where the tooth can no longer be saved. Choosing a crown now prevents:



- Future fractures
- Nerve damage
- Costly procedures
- And even tooth loss

In other words, *a crown protects you from the pain and expenses that come from waiting too long*. This is one of the smartest, most impactful dental decisions you can make today—for your health and your wallet.

A beautiful smile that makes you feel like YOU again

Imagine looking in the mirror and seeing a smile that feels whole, healthy, and beautiful. Imagine laughing freely—without feeling self-conscious. Imagine eating comfortably... without worrying about breaking a weakened tooth.

Our custom crowns are expertly designed to match your natural teeth perfectly. Most patients tell us their restored teeth look even better than before the damage happened.

This isn't just a dental treatment— it's a renewal of your confidence.

A team that truly cares about your smile

At our practice, you're not just another appointment. You're a person with goals, concerns, and a smile that deserves exceptional care. We take the time to understand your needs, answer your questions, and make sure you feel comfortable and confident throughout the entire process. Our gentle, modern approach ensures your crown looks stunning, feels natural, and supports your dental health long-term.

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2026 Peggy Rouse Welcome Home









ON TRACK FOR THE BULLDOGS



Richmond Hill High Hurdler Signs with Georgia and Aims for 2028 Olympics

Story by Stephen Prudhomme
Photography by Leidy Lester

Kendrick Joshua has overcome plenty of hurdles during his high school track career. The Richmond Hill High (RHHS) senior won the state title in the 300-meter hurdles last season and is ranked among the top high schoolers in the country and top 20 in the world.

One hurdle he did not face was deciding where to attend college on a track scholarship. Offered an athletic ride by all the schools in the Southeastern Conference (SEC), Joshua signed with the only school he ever considered - the University of Georgia.

"I've always liked Georgia since I was little," said Joshua, who grew up in Savannah before moving to Richmond Hill and attending RHHS starting as a freshman. "I was planning to go there. It was the first school to offer me a scholarship. I was overly excited when I got the offer."

Joshua took the fast track, both literally and figuratively, to earn a scholarship to Georgia. It all started with a talent and inclination for running.

Naturally fast, Joshua was a running back and wide receiver in football. He started playing at the age of 6 and continued through his freshman year at Richmond Hill High. When he broke his wrist as a sophomore, Kendrick, who also was competing in track, decided to focus on the latter sport and in particular the hurdles, an event he had discovered as a freshman.

"I was bored running on flat surfaces," said Kendrick, who has also competed in the 60-, 100- , 200- and 400-meter races. "I wanted something new."

Relying on his athletic ability and a talent for progressing faster than others, Joshua quickly made his mark in the hurdles. He placed on the podium in the 300 hurdles his first two years before winning the state title as a junior.

Joshua has a personal best time of 35.9 seconds in the 300-meter hurdles and wants to break the high school record of 34.8 seconds. He said form is the biggest factor in that distance. Remarking his speed is "up there" in the state and nation, Joshua said the 400-meter hurdles, which is the only event college teams feature in that discipline, is more of a stamina event. "My endurance is improving," he said. Although the hurdles are his best event, Joshua has showcased his his speed in the 60-, 100-, and 200-meter races with respective times of 6.82 seconds, 10.35 seconds and 21.38 seconds.

Joshua's weekly training sessions include running 250 to 500 meters at 80- to 90% speed, weight workout, and running 10 to 120 meters at full speed. He describes it as a job he hates, allowing him to do something he truly loves. "I use winning as a motivation for training," he explained. "I love to win."

Outside of running the hurdles, Joshua enjoys golf and photography. He remarked he doesn't go out much. Joshua said he misses football a lot and believes he could have played in college, adding he prefers competing as an individual rather than on a team.

Brittany Joshua said her son has always been a gifted athlete, starting at a young age. "He was the kid who picked up anything physical really fast," she said. "He was always fast and competitive at every sport."

Brittany attributes Kendrick's rapid improvement as a hurdler to hard training, willingness to listen, and never backing down from a challenge. Remarked Brittany: "He loves a challenge."

Those qualities have led to outstanding times and a number of medals. Although proud of these accomplishments, Brittany said she's most impressed with the way Kendrick pushes to be better even after a goal is met.

One of those goals was to play any sport in college but not just any college. "He has always been a UGA fan," Brittany said. "Watching him sign, you could see how proud he was of himself and that made me prouder."

Given the support for the University of Georgia throughout the state, it's not surprising Joshua received a "whole bunch" of positive feedback at school and in the local community when he announced his decision to







become a Bulldog. If he hadn't signed with Georgia, Joshua said his second choice would have been Texas Tech, alma mater for professional hurdler Caleb Dean and a fellow competitor in a race.

"We spoke before the race and it went well," Joshua said. "He runs pretty smoothly and is a cool guy to watch."

Levi Sybert, director of track and field and cross country at Richmond Hill High, has coached Joshua since his freshman year. He said Heather Sybert has served as Joshua's spring coach, and a number of hurdles coaches have worked with him during that time. According to Levi, Joshua, befitting his performance on the track, has made huge strides as a hurdler.

"Kendrick started out as just a brute force talent over the hurdles," said Levi, who has coached at Richmond Hill High since 2007. "He was able to shift his mind and become a master of the art of hurdling while having brute force strength. That's what has made him so incredibly successful- talent and intention."

Athletes from all sports have to make the adjustment from high school to college. It's an even greater challenge when going to a school such as Georgia, which competes in the demanding Southeast Conference and typically recruits the top athletes. The stories are many of athletes who dominated in high school but were unable to repeat that success in college. Levi remains confident Joshua will make the transition a smooth one.

"Kendrick should do great at Georgia," Levi said. "He is very self motivated and as long as he stays on path to what his true intentions are, he will be extremely successful to his desires."

Then there's the even more ambitious goal of qualifying for the Olympics, being named one of three individuals in his event out of a pool of the best college athletes in the country. Once again, Levi said he believes Joshua is up to the challenge.

"I believe he has enough meat left on the bone for that to be an obtainable goal for Kendrick," Levi said. "That is because he has not truly challenged himself in practice as he challenges himself in competition. If you can put that last critical element together with an elite training group at Georgia, it's going to be an amazing ride for him."

If this year is any indication, Joshua's ride can already be categorized as thrilling. Competing as a member of the Coastal Georgia Track Team, he won the men's 400-meter hurdles at the USA Track & Field U-20 Championships at the historic Hayward Field, University of Oregon with a time of 50.53.

That performance capped off a junior year in which Joshua captured the 6A state title in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 36.33 seconds and followed that up by winning the



Meet of Champions in Atlanta. His time of 35.94 was the second fastest in the nation in 2025.

Isaiah and Belinda Taylor have coached Joshua on the Coastal Georgia Track Team since he was 9 years old. "He is a very efficient hurdler," Isaiah said. "What makes him special is his speed between the hurdles, and his athleticism allows him the ability to snap his trail leg down faster than his competitors."

Like Sybert, Isaiah expects big things from Joshua in college and beyond. "I believe he will win the SEC 400-meter hurdles conference championship and qualify for the NCAA final," he said. "I really believe he will make the Olympic team in 2028."

Joshua has a personal best time of 50.5 seconds in the 400-meter hurdles. To qualify for the Olympics, he has to have a time of 48 to 49 seconds. That gives him several years to cut two to three seconds off his fastest time by "training at a higher level."

As with earning a scholarship to Georgia, Joshua has had a longtime dream of representing his country in the Olympics. "I've wanted to compete in the Olympics since I started running," Joshua said. "It would mean everything. It would be a big accomplishment if I make the team."

Kendrick started out as just a brute force talent over the hurdles … He was able to shift his mind and become a master of the art of hurdling while having brute force strength. That's what has made him so incredibly successful–talent and intention.

Carol Dotson, Joshua's aunt, said her nephew is only a few seconds away from the winning hurdles time at the Olympics and he's just starting out. She noted he's always been determined and wants to be No. 1 in everything he does. Dotson described Joshua as a very good hearted, focused individual, adding the family's glad he'll be attending Georgia.

"It's only four hours away," Dotson said. "The family can go there and he can visit us. Go Dawgs!" ■

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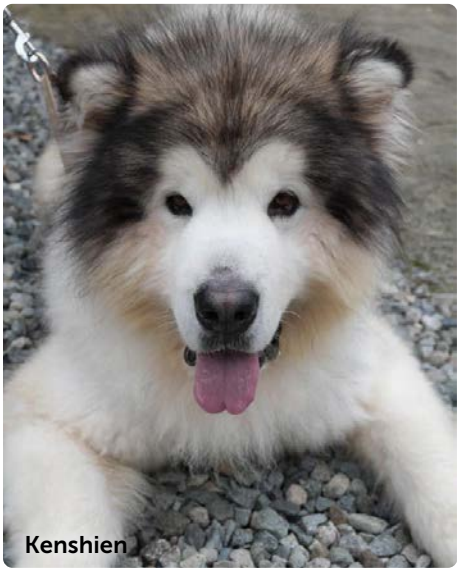
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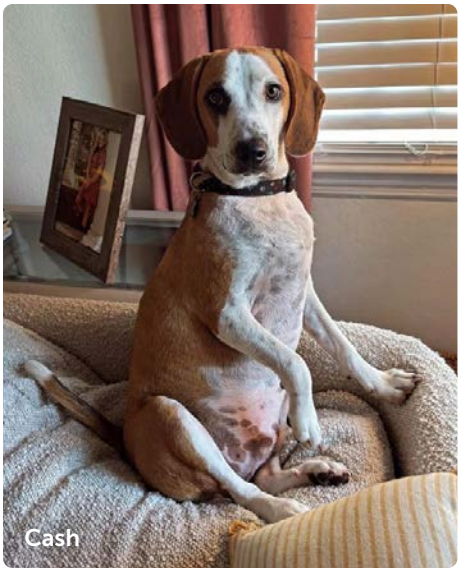

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Finding Magic in the Madness of Motherhood



New Year, Same Me (And That's Fine)

by Alycia Calderin



Every January, it happens like clockwork. The internet collectively decides we are all brand new people now. Suddenly, everyone is waking up at 5 a.m., drinking celery juice, running marathons, reading twelve self help books before breakfast, and becoming the "best version of themselves." And if you're not doing those things by January 3rd, it feels like you've already failed the year.

I used to buy into it. I used to make the lists, the goals, the declarations that this would be the year I finally figured it all out. Now? I'm tired. And honestly, I'm okay with being the same me, just a little more rested and a little less hard on myself.

There's so much pressure around the new year to reinvent everything. New habits. New body. New mindset. New personality, apparently. But after years of motherhood, marriage, and surviving life at full volume, I've realized I don't need to become someone else to be worthy of a good year. I don't need a "new me." I need a gentler me. The version of myself who knows her limits, understands her seasons, and doesn't confuse growth with exhaustion.

> "I don't need a 'new me.' I need a gentler me. The version of myself who knows her limits, understands her seasons, and doesn't confuse growth with exhaustion."

January is marketed as a fresh start, but for most moms, it's really just recovery. Recovery from December chaos, from too many obligations, from trying to make magic while holding everything together. January doesn't feel like a blank slate, it feels like sitting down for the first time in weeks and realizing how tired you actually are. And maybe that's okay. Maybe January isn't for becoming more. Maybe it's for demanding less.

The older I get, the more I realize I don't want to reinvent myself every year. I want to refine what already works. I still run on coffee, chaos, and cuss words. I still forget spirit days. I still overcommit and then wonder why I'm overwhelmed. But I'm also wiser now. I know what drains me. I know what fills me up. I know that saying "no" doesn't make me selfish, it makes me sustainable. And that feels like growth, even if it doesn't come with a vision board.

We've been sold this idea that growth has to be dramatic, that if you're not transforming in obvious, Instagram worthy ways, you're standing still. But real growth is quieter. It looks like choosing rest instead of proving something, letting go of goals that no longer fit your life, and deciding that peace matters more than productivity. It's realizing you can love who you are and still grow, without hating yourself into change.

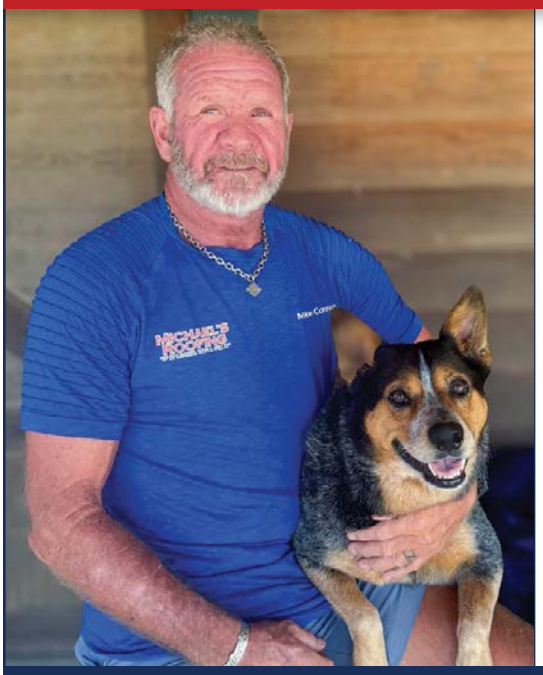
This year, I'm giving myself permission to stay the same in the ways that matter. Same heart. Same values. Same love for my people. And permission to change only what truly needs changing. Not because it's January, not because everyone else is doing it, but because I'm ready, or maybe because I'm not. And that's fine too.

Instead of resolutions, I want rhythm. Instead of reinvention, I want intention. I want to show up as myself - imperfect, evolving, tired, trying - without feeling like I need to announce a transformation to justify my existence. I want to model something different for my kids: that adulthood isn't about constantly becoming someone new, but about learning how to care for who you already are.

So if you're entering this year without a list of goals, without a word of the year, without a sudden urge to overhaul your entire life, you're not behind. You're human. And maybe the bravest thing we can do this year is stop trying to reinvent ourselves and start accepting the version of us that made it here.

New year. Same me. And honestly? She's doing just fine.

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We want to recognize and celebrate women who are making a meaningful difference in the lives of others—through leadership, service, mentorship, and dedication.

Do you know a woman whose actions and example have positively impacted those around her? **Nominate her today.**

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- Include the nominee's name, contact information, and a brief description of her impact
- **Deadline for nominations:** March 1

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